

FEBRUARY, 1924

HOME LANDS

VOL. 5

NO. 6



In this issue

A COUNTRY MINISTER WHO RESEMBLED HENRI FABRE
LET THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE HELP YOU
THE COUNTRY DINNER BELL



HOME LANDS

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GEORGE WASHINGTON

AMONG memorials of our first President, not the least stirring is wrought on a bronze panel of the door of the Morristown, New Jersey, City Hall, reproduced on our cover. The story runs thus:

The Morristown Presbyterian church was organized out of members of the rather too distant church at Hanover and its first pastor, Dr. Timothy Johnes, took up the work in 1742. Early in 1777 Washington took up headquarters in Morristown. A scourge of smallpox ran through the town and soldiery, and the church was used as a hospital.

The congregation met in the open air for worship, probably in the minister's orchard. The following is taken from a local publication, *The Record*, June, 1880:

"While the American army under the command of Washington lay encamped in the environs of Morristown, New Jersey, it occurred that the service of the communion, then observed semi-annually only, was to be administered. In a morning of the previous week, the General, after his accustomed inspection of the camp, visited the house of the Rev. Dr. Johnes, then pastor of that church, and after



the usual preliminaries, thus accosted him:

"'Doctor, I understand that the Lord's Supper is to be celebrated with you next Sunday. I would learn if it accords with the canons of your church to admit communicants of another denomination?'"

"The Doctor enjoined, 'Most certainly ours is not the Presbyterian table, General, but the Lord's table; and we hence give the Lord's invitation to all His followers of whatever name.'"

"The General replied: 'I am glad of it; that is as it ought to be; but as I was not quite sure

of the fact, I thought I would ascertain it from yourself, as I propose to join with you on that occasion. Though a member of the Church of England, I have no exclusive partialities.'"

"The Doctor assured him of a cordial welcome, and the General was found seated with the communicants the next Sabbath."

Thus we have pictured what is the only recorded public communion participated in by Washington after he entered public life. A second panel reproduced above shows the General and Martha Washington observing a skirmish at Springfield, near Morristown.

Angelo Patri Writes of Washington, the Man of Prayer

ALL the pictures of Washington show him as a strong, grave, assured man. His is the face of one who had great faith: faith in himself and faith in the righteousness of his idea. Looking at him as he stands out from the canvas, we feel the power of the man; power to plan and to carry through. We recognize the leader. We feel that he could plan out his course, believe in it with all the force of his courageous spirit, and hold to it at any cost.

We know that this is the face of a man who could pray. Few of us know how to pray or even know what a real prayer is. Most of us think it is a hurried cry for help; a cry of distress in the night of trouble; a plea for protection; a beggar's cry for alms.

The real prayer is none of these. It is something quite different. It is a summation of the soul's power. It is a recognition of the soul's relationship with the great soul of the universe, God. Only the great soul, born of trial and stress, really knows how to pray. Washington knew.

He conceived the idea of America. This should be the land where men might live and grow in freedom. One man should have the right to call the next one brother, and the duty of shouldering the other's burden. Men should be free in that sense and that spirit, the same spirit that made Washington's life a prayer.

While the battle for Washington's great idea was on he never ceased to pray. Once in the winter of Valley Forge, when things looked dark for the people of America, a Quaker heard Washington praying in the woods.

He rushed home and told his wife Betsy about it. "We'll win surely, Betsy, for I heard it in his prayer."

Washington will never die while the spirit of him, the struggle for human liberty, remains a part of the people. His prayer will bring its own answer, and there will be no place for the selfishness and greed and discontent that try to thwart it.

By Permission D. Appleton and Company

THE VOCATIONAL SCHOOL AT MARTINSBURG

STATE authorities prophesy a bright future for the Martinsburg Vocational School. It began in 1916 as Morrison Cove College, founded by four brothers who had been resident in the community. As a college it did not succeed, but in 1919 the joint boards of Taylor, Huston and North Woodbury—the three townships surrounding Martinsburg—took over the building and a Vocational School was opened with an enrollment of 89. It has become the center for community activity for the entire cove, and has drawn together not only the children of rural districts, but the older men and women, too. It has been the chief influence toward organization of farmers' co-operatives and the cow testing associations, and it was largely through school propaganda that Martinsburg procured its new electric light and power plant.

The school owes its success chiefly to its fine teaching force and its very excellent curriculum, which includes several courses in agriculture, cooking, and sewing, besides the regular academic work which meets college entrance requirements.

In the agricultural department the project method predominates. The boys study farm methods and practices in the class room, and at their homes work out practical experiments.

Poultry raising has become the chief interest. In November, 1920, six boys organized and became, through their efforts, the first "Thousand Dollar Poultry Club" in the State of Pennsylvania. At the completion of the year's work they had a combined labor income of \$1,732.75. A comparison of the figures on project work during the first three years of the Vocational School shows, in 1920, an average labor income per boy of \$64.01; in 1921 the average increased to \$105.64, and in 1922 to \$159.52. The record for the State was established by a boy who had a labor income of \$803.82 during the first year of his project. During the last year, the boys of the Poultry Club realized a total of 8,967 dozens of eggs from their project.

Other projects undertaken include the raising of pigs, corn, oats, potatoes and bees. One of the fathers said: "My boy is learning many things about farming that I don't know. I am studying hard to keep up with him, but I can see myself falling into the rear." The fact that 52% of the boys who have graduated from this school are now engaged in farm work is sufficient evidence of the benefit of the Vocational School to the farms of Morrison Cove.

In the shop the boys make farm gates, poultry mash hoppers, brooder houses, etc. During

laboratory periods they make Bordeaux mixers, become familiar with the Babcock milk tests, learn to balance rations for all classes of farm animals, and do practical work in the school vegetable gardens. The girls' work follows practically the same lines with the exception that home economics takes the place of scientific agriculture.

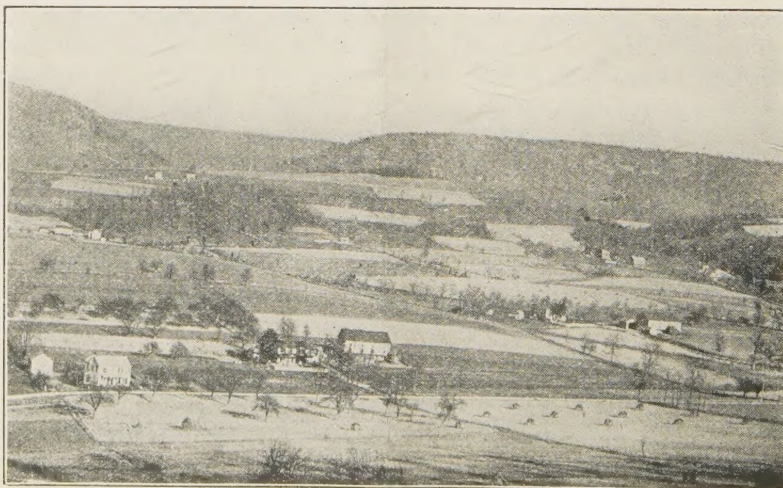
A very profitable course is that of rural sociology, which deals especially with the problems of the home community. The effort is made to have boys and girls see the community as it really is, and to provide them with sufficient progressive ideas to enable them to correct its weaknesses. In a final examination this year, one of the questions asked was, "Criticism your own community socially, religiously and morally."

A large part of the English course is taken up with practical work. All school reports and accounts are written by pupils under the principal's supervision. These articles include local news items, farm journal and rural reports.

The school supports several athletic teams which compete with other high schools in the district. Boys and girls have athletic associations, and the girls are awarded letters as well as the boys. To earn a letter includes, for girls, proficiency in game teaching. They must be able to teach fifteen games not commonly known to the average pupil. The result is that the rural sections are always eager to secure these young women as teachers as well as for workers in rural organizations, in directing games.

The girls' and boys' choruses take a leading part in all the community's activities. There are two great events in the school year—"School Day" and "Farmers' Week." On School Day all the rural schools in the three townships are invited to participate in competitive activities, the Vocational School acting as the host. There are exhibitions of bird houses, hand sewing, penmanship, and free hand drawing, and there are athletic contests for which prizes are awarded by the faculty. Approximately 700 rural pupils were present last year. The Home Economics Department served a fine and systematically prepared luncheon. School Day gives both boys and girls excellent training in leadership and management. The boys act as judges at the field meet, while the girls teach games to groups of smaller pupils.

Farmers' Week is held annually under the direction of the county agent and the supervisor of Agriculture at the school. Each day's program deals with a definite farmer problem, and speakers are present from the State College. The first day is Dairy Day, when such projects as cow testing, accredited herds, and marketing of milk products



Pennsylvania Valley Farms

are discussed. Instructions are given for controlling diseases among cattle. One day is given over to the discussion of sheep and hog breeding. The third day is Business Day, when farm accounts are explained. An open forum follows on the subject of the farmer and the merchant in business relations. Leading farmers and business men lead the discussion. The last is Poultry Day. It is estimated that 400 farmers attend daily.

The four classes in the high school are responsible for the entertainments during the week and the faculty offers prizes to the classes providing the best programs, most of which are based on some phase of rural life, and have for their purpose both amusement and instruction.

Each year the senior class produces a play. Last year a unique entertainment was given in the form of a play in two acts, the first picturing Martinsburg as it was, and the second as it should be ten years hence, with churches, schools and other organizations working hand in hand.

The Vocational School is growing rapidly, and although it already has good equipment, an unusual library, laboratory and work shop—there is need for more working space, a larger auditorium and a gymnasium. No one who saw the last year's poster exhibit for Farmer's Week could doubt that the school has a progressive program. The slogans on these posters have been put into practice, and therefore the institution has attained its present position of importance throughout the Cove. Here are some of the expressions of its forward-looking rural community mind:

- I. Our Rural Program: Better Homes, Schools, Churches, Wholesome Amusements, Clean Sports, Community Pride, Better Health.
- II. The Country Needs Farmers, Wives and Home Makers. Teachers, Pastors, Doctors. Why not train community boys and girls to meet these needs?
- III. Our Best Crop—Boys and Girls—Let's cultivate them. Give them a chance. Keep them in the country.

When rural schools in rural communities undertake rural programs of this kind, we can begin to hope for better days for the open country.

A PARABLE OF COOPERATION

A MAN was journeying in mountainous country and arrived at a spot where a great boulder had rolled on to the path and filled it entirely.

Apart from the path there was no other way either to the right or to the left.

Seeing that he could not continue his journey on account of this boulder, he tried to move it to make a way for himself. But though he wearied himself by his efforts they were in vain.

When he saw this, he sat down filled with alarm, saying: What will become of me when night overtakes me in this solitary place, without food, shelter, or defence, at a time when the wild beasts wander about in search of prey?

While he was absorbed in this thought, another traveler arrived, and after having tried without success to move the rock, also sat down in silence with bowed head.

Afterwards, there came several others, and none was able to move the boulder.

And they were all greatly afraid.

At last one of them said to the others: "Brothers, let us pray to our Father in Heaven; perhaps He will have pity on us in our distress."

So they listened to what he had to say, and prayed from their hearts.

And afterwards, the one who had said, Let us pray, said, "Brothers, who knows whether *altogether* we may not do that which *alone* we could not do?"

So they got up, and all-together they pushed the boulder, and it gave way. And they went on their journey in peace.

THE traveler is Man: the journey is life; the boulder is the difficulty he meets on each step of the path.

No *man alone* can move this boulder. But God has ordained that it shall not be too great for *them who journey together*.

—From Lammenais's "*Paroles d'un Croyant*."



WHAT A COUNTRY CLERGYMAN DID IN HIS SPARE TIME

GILBERT WHITE 1720-1793

William L. Bailey

THE *Natural History of Selborne* has been oftener printed than any other work on natural history. It ranks with Izaak Walton's *The Complete Angler* in accuracy and charm. Darwin regarded it as having given the inspiration to his own work.

It is the work of a country minister who was born, lived, and died within the limits of a country parish. Gilbert White was in a way a recluse. For long he was only the obscure vicar of Selborne. Then his letters discovered him to the world and have given him an honored place in the history of modern science. His genius and career are strikingly like that of Henri Fabre. His work has the accuracy of a Fabre or a Darwin and the literary charm of a Maeterlinck. A minister and the son of a minister, he made science serve his God.

One of his biographers saw in his life "a most valuable record and example of how the leisure hours of a country clergyman may be employed." For *The Natural History of Selborne* is nothing but the correspondence of a country clergyman. Let any one consult his own letter files, and stand in the judgment with Gilbert White.

WHITE was not given to writing of himself or his personal affairs. As he himself said, "the beneficence of the Creator as exemplified in His works are a more proper matter for communication." These letters are such as any country minister *might* write. They are the simple recording of valuable facts, as they were really seen or learned, without embellishment except as received from truth, and without allowing the imagination to ramble and assume conclusions the exactness of which it had not proved. White had the scientific spirit to a degree which amounted to reverence and even worship. "The wisdom of God in Creation" is a very frequent phrase in his letters. No one whose life is on record has perhaps more fully obeyed the command of the Master to "consider" Nature and Nature's God.

At the height of his fame, biographers, relatives, and Oriel College (of which he was for fifty years a Fellow) sought a picture of him—in vain. He could several times have taken excellent College positions but he chose to remain in his village. White had realized as do few country ministers the opportunity his local situation afforded for the cultivation of the largest interests of the human heart and mind. Selborne was a peculiarly happy situation for the work he found it possible to do there. Yet it has been the spirit of this man that made great good come out of it. The place and the man cannot be divorced. "Gilbert White of Selborne" as a country minister followed truly in the way of the Man of Nazareth.

What might be said of Selborne could well be said of almost any country village. "The church and vicarage, with a few houses, lie embosomed among trees in the valley. Luxuriant beech-trees rise on the side of a steep hill, appearing to overhang the village, and go by the name of the 'Hanger.' This gives to the place a particular and



Selborne Church from the Fields

striking beauty. . . . The parish was large, touching on twelve others. It was about fifty miles southwest of London. The village made one straggling street, nearly a mile long, in the valley. There were some seven hundred people in the village, a large hamlet, and on the neighboring farms; three hundred in the

village and the rest elsewhere." For the rest, Selborne had a history as a Priory during mediaeval days.

Here White was born, lived and died. On his own confession it was "the wonders of Creation" that occupied him, "not the attainment of scientific knowledge" but "the preservation of a meek and quiet spirit." White was a Christian pastor, and he loved Nature for man's sake, and revealed her to him, that God might be "declared." Science was his way to worship.

That there is contained in, or rather *with*, *The Natural History of Selborne*, a series of letters called "The Antiquities of Selborne" is seldom known and little noted. Granted that this latter is the lesser portion of his famous work, it is still perhaps the first attempt at a scientific observation and analysis of human life, in the spirit of the present day Survey. It is pioneering. And while it is historical and antiquarian in tone, this was a necessary approach to an historical community like Selborne in a measure in which it would not be so of an American village.

White's original and general purpose in all his work was to make a "Parochial History." He felt that if this were done here, and others could be induced to imitate, there would be the materials for real knowledge and understanding of rural England. Its originality—in his day—consisted in including natural history as well as the usual material of parish record, and in broadening the scope of these latter. Being a pioneer in this realm White doubtless tended to emphasize such aspects of his Survey as appealed to a naturalist.

Be this as it may, it was such work as his—for he was above all an enthusiast and inspirer of others—that has given to modern man a new heaven and a new earth. The Rev. Gilbert White pioneered the scientific study of a country community.

HE was always concerned with the larger bearings of these his own local observations. In fact, his correspondence—which latterly was world-wide in scope—arose out of his desire to acquaint himself with such. The study of petty local creeks, springs, and wells might not seem worth while, but White saw in such *his* opportunity for understanding of the world as a whole. He specially mentions the local "watershed" that sent streamlets on the way to different "seas." He reports on local soils, in minute detail, from talking with farmers and gardeners, but knows them to be portions of ancient and vast earth-processes. He writes often of single wellknown landmark trees, in the neighborhood, but sees them as illustrations of the forest cover of England. Well-digging, road-building operations, and all quarries in the parish were constantly under his

observation for fossils, and soil and geological formations. His letters show that he was concerned with the economics of these natural products, and their methods of extraction, preparation and use. He systematically recorded the rainfall.

One may well imagine what sermons on "God in Creation" he spoke to men at their work, and to many a housewife as he secured this information.

White knew the use of earth-worms, and led Darwin to his great researches. Echoes in the valley led him to physical calculations and experiments—with the aid of his country folk, who "marveled" as they worked the magic of Nature. Of animals and birds he got many rare specimens "from the countrymen's museum"—the end of the barn, where it was his pastoral habit to look if perchance there might be any there nailed up. He "had eyes and saw" for he tells us that he was able to explain the presence of certain fish in a pond by noting that the cattle which came to stand in the water "in the heat of the day" were hosts to the flies which maintained the fish. "The fowl of the air" were an endless wonder to him. His letter describing the flight of different birds has no rival in literature except Victor Hugo's chapter on the Winds of Earth in *The Toilers of the Sea*.

Yet all such study had a human interest motive for White. He earnestly wished for more study of the insects about *the house and the fields*. The relation of deer in the forests nearby to the morals of the people and the use of those forests for soap-ashes and pasture concern him. He writes a very detailed account of "rush lights." The food habits of the poor, and changes in these, with their effect on health and skin diseases, the neglect of the grasses and other useful plants by botanists; these show the direction of his interest.

He searched the parish records back for sixty years for vital statistics. He found that baptisms exceeded burials by a third, and that the chance of life was forty-nine years. He found—by close observation on pastoral visitation—that the very poor are ever the worst economists. He records the story of an idiot boy who was "a genius with bees." He records rural superstitions. He pursued in detail the life-story of a long-lived hog (few of which he says are ever

permitted by us to live out their full usefulness) and tells of its seventeen years and littering of three hundred pigs.

There is such a wealth of wonders in any parish in America!

A COUNTRY WOMAN'S PRAYER

ONE of the most helpful services which each year we hold in our church situated in a rural community, is that conducted by the members of the Ladies' Aid Society. They take every part of the service, save the sermon, and I hope some day to have them take that also. At our last service the prayer was assigned to the wife of one of our farmers. I was so impressed by it that I thought readers of HOME LANDS should share it. It was as follows:

ALMIGHTY God, our Heavenly Father, in whom we live and move and have our being; from Thy kind hand comes down every good and perfect gift, and we humbly thank Thee for all Thy loving kindness to us.

We come before Thee confessing our sins, for which we ask Thy forgiveness. Bless us in our bodies and our spirits, which are Thine. Grant us food and strength and clothing and shelter as our needs, and give us grace to know and do Thy will. Make the path of duty plain before us. Keep us from temptation and from sin, enabling us to glorify Thee upon earth.

Bless, too, all our loved ones whom in the arms of our prayers we would bring before Thee. Heal any who are sick; comfort the sorrowful and strengthen any who are faltering. Grant them each one Thy favor, in which is life; Thy loving kindness which is better than life.

Remember graciously the community in which we live, in all its interests, temporal and spiritual. Prosper Thy church among us and give success to its workers. Bless our country, and make us that happy people whose God is the Lord. Send out Thy light and Thy truth, and hasten the coming of Thy kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

REV. FRED SMITH,
Carthage, S. Dak.

THE GRASS AND THE ROSE

(From "The Rose-Garden" of Sadi)

I saw some handfuls of the rose in bloom,
with . . . grass . . .

I said,

"What means this worthless grass, that it
Should in the rose's fairy-circle sit?"

Then wept the grass, and said,

"Be still, and know,

The kind their old associates ne'er forego.
Mine is no beauty, hue, or fragrance—true
But, in the garden of the Lord I grew."

"His ancient servant I,
Reared by his bounty from the dust:

Whate'er my quality,
I'll in his favoring mercy trust.

No stock of worth is mine,
Nor fund of worship, yet he will

A means of help divine;
When aid is past, he'll save me still.

Those who have power to free,
Let their old slaves in freedom live,

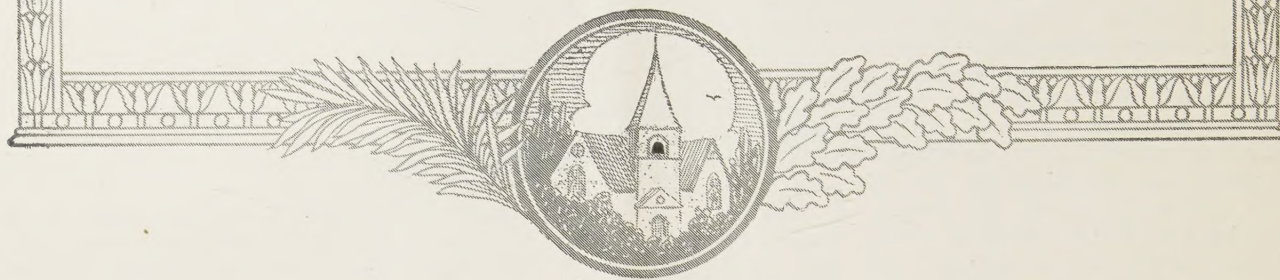
Thou Glorious Majesty!
Me, too, thy ancient slave, forgive."



In green pastures

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AT WORK

Department Edited by J. M. Somerndike



THE BEGINNERS OR PRIMARY DEPARTMENT OF THE ONE ROOM SCHOOL

THE first step in grading a Sunday school should be to separate the children of the beginners and primary ages (from four to eight years of age) for exercises and lessons which are especially adapted to their special needs and capabilities. Many ingenious devices have been introduced in one room churches to provide a place in which the children may be taught their own special lessons, memory work, etc., apart from the other pupils.

Inquiry has frequently been made as to the equipment which should be provided for the children of this age, and suggestions have been requested as to what is practicable in the way of equipment for a one-room church where the children of the beginners and primary ages must occupy a place that is separated by a screen or curtain. It is impossible, of course, to have absolute seclusion, for the curtains or screen should be low enough to admit the light and to provide for proper ventilation, but it is better than nothing. A departmental superintendent should be appointed to plan the programs, arrange the memory work, and assume the responsibility for conducting the department in an efficient way. Possibly the children within the department could be divided into classes (not over eight or ten in a class) with a teacher definitely assigned to each class. The classes should be divided according to ages, so that all the children in the department, when they reach their ninth birthday in a given year, will be ready to be promoted as a class. Of course, if there are enough pupils of the same age to form more than one class, they should be divided, the boys in one class and the girls in the other. The superintendent may teach the entire department as one class if other teachers cannot be enlisted.

If possible some chairs should be obtained with low seats, suitable for children of this age. If chairs cannot be ob-

tained, benches may be used, but the seats should be low, in order to make them comfortable for little children. The song books which are recommended for children of this age are "Carols" and "Songs for Little People." The books need not be provided for the children, but two books should fill the usual requirement for a small one-room church. The departmental graded lessons should be used, and the children of the primary age (six, seven and eight years) should receive their first lessons in using the Bible. If it is possible to obtain some pictures illustrating Bible scenes and events, they should be attractively but inexpensively framed and hung on the wall, low enough to be seen by the children.

The program of worship should consist of hymns, Bible stories, missionary stories, memorizing of portions of Scripture, the Ten Commandments, Beatitudes, etc. A blackboard is not an absolute essential, but it is a very valuable addition to the equipment, and will be found useful on many occasions.

The promotions should be made once a year, on Rally Day, the last Sunday in September, the pupils taking their places in the next higher grade on the first Sunday in October. Any Sunday school, no matter how small, if its leaders have the vision of better things and the energy to put forth the necessary effort, can make a beginning toward a graded Sunday school by taking this very simple step and providing this

modest equipment. It is certain that the little children will acquire a far better knowledge of the Bible, and what we teach them will be far more intelligently absorbed if the instruction is imparted in a manner that takes into consideration the capabilities of the child at each period of its development.

"There is no particular advantage," says an experienced survey worker, "in a cradle roll unless the church is able to strike a balance in its favor twenty years later. The interval between the cradle roll and the first signs of leadership is full of disasters."

LUTHER BURBANK says: "Weeds are what they are because they are jostled, crowded, trampled upon, scorched by fierce heat, starved, or perhaps suffering from cold or wet feet, tormented by insect pests or a lack of nourishing food or sunshine. There is not a weed alive that will not sooner or later respond liberally to good cultivation." Why then is the world so full of human weeds today which are a menace to society? Is it not because in the period of childhood they did not have proper care, nourishment and training? Is it not because in their childhood their innate feelings of reverence, desire for the good and pure, and love for God were trampled upon, crowded, scorched by scorn and ridicule, starved and exposed to disease, or completely neglected?

JESUS SAID, "FEED MY LAMBS."

KEEPING SUNDAY SCHOOL RECORDS

WHILE Sunday school leaders of all denominations have been devising and promoting improved methods to provide a system of grading and strengthening the organization, for the purpose of increased efficiency in Bible teaching, very little attention has been given to the matter of developing an efficient system of records, or the training of secretaries for the proper handling of their work. Experience of many years in gathering the annual Sunday school statistics of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. has revealed many inaccuracies, and frequently gross carelessness, in the keeping of records in the individual Sunday schools. It would be safe to assume that not more than ten per cent of our Sunday schools keep adequate or accurate records. Graded departments are introduced, but the old system of records is allowed to remain unchanged. Most of our Sunday school secretaries are keeping their records in the same manner as they did twenty-five or fifty years ago. The graded Sunday school records should be arranged by graded departments, and by classes within the department. It is necessary to note more than the mere attendance or absence of the pupils. In a graded school each grade has its own standards not only of attendance but of study and service, and each pupil should be scored according to his accomplishments, measured by the departmental standards. The great difficulty that confronts us today with reference to the whole matter of Sunday school records is the fact that we have underestimated the importance of the secretary's office, and we too frequently elect to the office someone who is not qualified for it. Without instruction, and with no training or guide book, the newly elected secretary takes up the records bequeathed to him by his predecessor, and instead of carefully studying the whole situation and devising a system that will be adequate and efficient he simply carries on the records in the same old way. I have often wondered why there are no special conferences in state Sunday school conventions for Sunday school secretaries and treasurers.

The time has come when this state of affairs should be remedied. We cannot hope to have an efficient Sunday school organization until we have introduced an efficient system of administration, and we must recognize that the secretary of the Sunday school is one of the most important of its administrative officers. Many different devices have been invented for the secretary's use, some of which are simple and very efficient. Others are complicated and quite impracticable for use in a small school and they should be avoided. The best plan of procedure is to study the situation carefully and then make a system that is best suited to the local organization.

A Sunday school leader describes the task of the Sunday school secretary as follows:

"He should be a Christian man, intelligent, interested in the school's present and future. He is intensely in earnest and studies how to make his records and reports most helpful to the school by way of comparison and incentive. He is faithful to duty and sees that every detail is worked out thoughtfully and carefully and that a strict account of officers, teachers and pupils is given.

"He helps plan for promotion and graduation and looks after the certificates and diplomas. He sees that letters and other communications are sent out when needed in the interests of the school, including the reporting and following up of absentees, which is so vital to the life and growth of the school. He sees that all reports are promptly presented at the Workers' Council or business meeting of the school, to the superintendent, the pastor, the Church, and organized work of the city, township or state as may be required.

He should see that the reports for each regular session of the school are gathered carefully and promptly by his assistants and tabulated in a neat manner and read carefully and distinctly to the departments or divisions, or entire school, as may be required. He should also see that proper bulletin boards with announcements and reports of school are secured, properly placed and taken care of. He should see that visitation cards, prospective member list, and other important clerical matters are looked after promptly.

"Careful preparation for the school session is of the utmost importance. Every secretary should be thoroughly acquainted with his task, prepared for it and always on hand at each session of the school, ready to fill his place with the least disturbance possible to the school. A secretary who is noisy and fussy, who is always talking and whispering to pupils, librarians, and others during the teaching period does more harm than good. His work should be done in an orderly manner, without attracting attention. He should be a school builder. We believe he is a valuable aid in enlarging the school and in making its work permanent and of the highest type."

THEY SAID, "IT CAN'T BE DONE" BUT THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL MISSIONARY DID IT

THE Sunday school Missionary has many discouragements, and he is constantly confronted by the great enemy of all Christian effort, indifference. Open opposition is far easier to overcome than the stolid indifference of people who are not willing to make any effort for community betterment.

The Rev. John T. Hartman, a Sunday school Missionary of many years' experience in Kansas and Missouri, gives an interesting account of the development of a field in which it seemed utterly impossible to obtain community cooperation. He writes:

"Recently I visited a school which was organized less than a year ago. The need for a Sabbath school was great at that time, but encouragement was small. All admitted the need, but in the next breath declared the impossibility of maintaining a school for a number of reasons which were thought good and sufficient. This leads me to ask, What if Sabbath school Missionaries would cease their efforts to organize a school, when told by everyone in the community that it would be a hopeless venture?

"If so, there would be no report of progress nor of favorable results. Both the need and the discouragements are the strongest arguments for the necessity of Sabbath school Missionary work. We must supply the need and do the apparently impossible. But when we see entire communities transformed because of our faith and perseverance, it is all worth the effort.

"That is what happened in this field. The Sabbath school was started after two evening services had preceded, where we impressed upon the parents their responsibility in helping, at least to the extent of sending their children. Ten months later on a Sabbath morning, in the first home that I visited, I found a young lady with a Bible in her lap, with other helps, studying and preparing her lesson as teacher of a primary class of twenty-four children. This girl ten months ago thought mostly of dancing and joy-riding. Today she has come sixteen miles on the interurban car, the round trip costing 55 cents, to instruct this class. It is her greatest joy. At the place of meeting, on the outside is a group of boys, respectful and orderly. A year ago they were running wild, noisy and profane. As I entered the building fifty children greeted me, all clean and tastefully attired. A year ago they were careless and unkempt. Others are coming in, carrying Bibles. The superintendent came to greet me. A year ago he never thought of lifting his voice in prayer,

much less leading a Sunday school. Now he does both with freedom, earnestness and efficiency. The school joined in singing Gospel songs with spirit and enthusiasm. They all bowed their heads while the Missionary led in prayer. To the music of a fine new piano, which has been purchased since the organization, the classes march to their places, for the study of the lesson. Then a hymn is sung and the secretary is asked to give the report. The total attendance is eighty-two. The Sunday school Missionary is asked to give a talk, after which the meeting is thrown open for verses of Scripture. About twenty-five respond in quick order, both

children and grown-ups taking part. The birthday offering is then received, and the evening service by the regular pastor is announced, all being urged to attend. The school is then closed with an earnest prayer by the superintendent, after which friends and neighbors tarry to greet each other.

"The entire community is changed, and where sin and indifference reigned, the Sunday school has brought new and higher ideals, better living conditions, happier family life, and consecration to the service of God."

J. T. HARTMAN

THE STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

A RESOURCE OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH

Ralph A. Felton

BEAUTIFYING the Church and Parsonage Grounds.

There is a Department of Landscape Gardening in every College of Agriculture, and in this department there is a specialist giving his time wholly to extension work. He visits communities through the state and puts on demonstrations of the planting of shrubbery and trees. Any community that asks for his services receives them. His method, whether or not he use a truck, is either to order shrubs and trees beforehand or select from those found growing wild in the community. He makes a demonstration, not only as to how to plant these shrubs and trees, but where to plant them. The whole community is invited to come to this demonstration and make their own application of ways and means to improve their own homes. Any house, such as the manse or a church, in which the people are interested, would be more suitable for this demonstration than another residence.

Interior Decoration. Every College of Agriculture has one or more specialists who give their time in the field to the matter of Interior Home Decoration. They prefer to do this by means of demonstrations. If a parsonage is to be remodeled they would be glad to come and help with the entire scheme from paint and wall-paper to pictures.

A Sewing Machine School. In the Department of Rural Engineering most colleges have an extension worker who conducts sewing machine schools in rural communities. He would welcome the co-operation of a Ladies' Aid Society in this work. Old machines are brought to this extension school for mending and repair work.

Culling the Pastor's Flock. In every poultry department there are three or four extension specialists who give lectures and demonstrations. One of these demonstrations is the culling of the non-laying hens. This program is carried out in any requesting community.

Community Halls. At Cornell, and in half a dozen other colleges, one of the extension specialists gives his time to the fostering of plans for community halls, grange halls, parish houses and other types of social rooms. He advises not only regarding the architecture and the building plans, but also regarding the program of the activities in the hall after it is built.

Country Life Institutes. Cornell is conducting two-day institutes in rural communities. These are discussion meetings rather than speech-making affairs. A list of subjects is put into the hands of each person that attends the institute and everyone takes part. The subjects cover an appraisal of the community by the people themselves and a discussion of needed improvements.

School for Recreational Leaders. During the months of January, February and March at least one hundred rural

communities will be reached by the extension specialist at Cornell with a school for training recreational leaders. Every young people's society in these communities and other church organizations may be helped by these recreational schools.

Pageants and Plays for Church Occasions. In New York State the extension specialists at Cornell are putting on, in various counties over the State, County Training Schools in Amateur Dramatics and Pageantry. These are held in churches and grange halls for the purpose of helping the young people in the matter of putting on home-talent plays and pageants.

Heating, Lighting and Water Systems for the Country Church. The department of Rural Engineering helps communities install heating, lighting or water systems in churches or parsonages or in other rural homes. The extension specialists come not to help one family alone, but to give a demonstration of how it should be done, putting the system in one particular home but inviting the neighbors in not only to help but to learn about how the system should be installed.

Work With Boys and Girls. The Junior Project leaders from the Colleges as well as the County Club Agents are anxious to instruct the boys and girls in any community in various home projects such as gardening, poultry, and livestock. These groups of boys could meet at the church and would be guided in their work by the rural pastor.

A Bulletin a Minute. Cornell sent out more than a bulletin every minute during the month of November. A large number of these in response to different requests from farm people on every imaginable phase of country life.

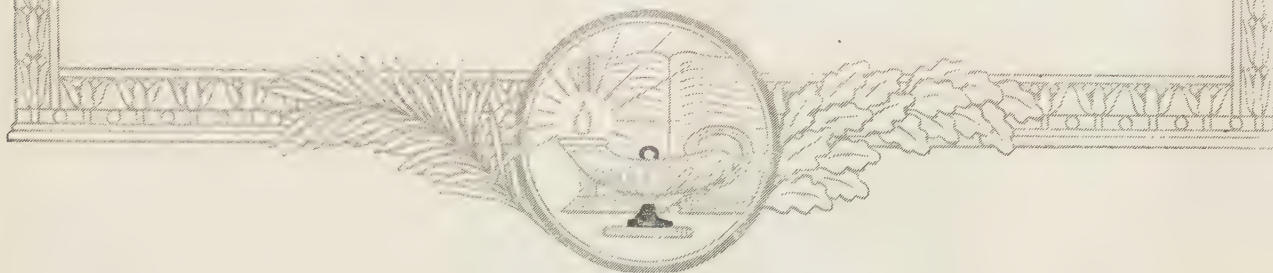
Short Courses and Conferences. Every College of Agriculture has a week's meeting once a year, usually known as Farmers' Week, at which the country people from all over the State come with their pastors to the College for discussions and demonstrations in every phase of farm life. During the winter months numerous short courses are given, many of which are of interest to the country pastor,—such as bee keeping, poultry raising, vegetable gardening, floriculture, health and hygiene, public speaking, dramatics and a wide variety of practical and cultural subjects.

Summer Schools for Rural Pastors. A dozen or more colleges of agriculture have put on a summer school of from ten days to three weeks for rural pastors. Prominent church leaders are secured as teachers; well-known ministers are invited to come to lecture. There is practically no expense with the attendance upon these schools. The tuition is free and often the room rent.

County Agents. Every county has a county agricultural agent and most counties have home bureau or home economics agents. Over half the counties have junior extension agents.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Department Edited by Harold McA. Robinson, D.D.



A BOYS' WORK PROGRAM FOR THE RURAL CHURCH

Harold I. Donnelly, Director of Boys' Work

THERE are some things that are impossible. One of these impossibilities is a real program for boys in our rural churches." This is not a word-for-word quotation from any particular writer, but it does represent the "between-the-lines" spirit of several discouraged letters from pastors and other leaders in rural communities.

It is indeed true that the problems confronting the leader of boys in the rural church differ in many respects from those of his city brother, so that the detailed program of one is wholly inadequate for the needs of the other. Many programs have failed because this fact has been forgotten. It is always impossible to build a detailed program that will be satisfactory in every situation. Boys are individuals with individual characteristics and needs and no two of them are exactly alike. Groups of boys differ in the same way. If each group of individual boys, whether in city, town or country, is to follow an adequate program the details of that program must be planned with their individual characteristics and needs in full view. A National Program can only expect to furnish materials from which each leader, with the help of his boys, may build a program adequate for his group.

WHAT IS AN ADEQUATE PROGRAM?

THE term "adequate" is used so frequently in describing programs that it is necessary to define exactly what is meant. From the point of view of a leader of boys in rural communities, what kind of a program may be considered adequate? There are at least five characteristics that may be mentioned as essential to any program before it deserves the distinction of being called "adequate."

In the first place, it must be *adequate* in PURPOSE. Since it is true that the content of any program is determined largely by its purpose, it follows that an adequate program must set a purpose that is complete. The purpose of all boys' work should be the development in the boy of a well-balanced Christian character, expressing itself in service to others.

Secondly, an adequate program will be *complete* in its MATERIALS. Having set such a high purpose it is necessary that the materials provided for reaching the purpose be sufficient in number to meet all the needs of the boy, well-balanced in proportion so that his life may grow in its every phase, and planned from his own point of view in order

that they may be of the greatest interest and value to him. These materials should give him opportunity to work with the other boys in group enterprises and should encourage individual initiative in enterprises of his own. An important element is some form of insignia indicating his progress in following the program.

Thirdly, an adequate program will be *simple* in its ORGANIZATION. There must be machinery for the carrying out of any program and this should be as effective as possible. Inasmuch as the program centers in the church the organization for the boys should use the units already existing in the church, such as the Sunday school class or the department. This unification of organization allows for a unification of program otherwise impossible.

In the fourth place, an adequate program will be *broad* in its SCOPE, recognizing the place of the home, the church and the school in the life of the boy and bringing all these activities into harmony that each may contribute its share to his development. It will also make use of the work and play of the boy as important elements of his growth.

Finally, an adequate program will be *Christian* in SPIRIT. Not only will the religious emphasis be placed upon the Sunday meetings of the boys, but throughout the week, the same spirit will permeate all that is done. Since the real purpose of the program is to help the boys place God at the center of a completely developed life, it is necessary in all the program activities to keep God ever in his mind.

WHERE CAN SUCH A PROGRAM BE FOUND?

EARLY in the fall there was issued by Westminster Press the Handbook for Presbyterian Pioneers and a Manual for Leaders. These two books represent the Presbyterian adaptation of the pioneer section of the Christian Citizenship Program which is planned for boys from twelve to fourteen years of age. This program is characterized by all the qualifications mentioned above. It is adequate in its purpose, adequate in its materials, including its emphasis on missionary education, adequate in its organization, adequate in its scope and adequate in its spirit. Jesus Christ is held up before the boy as his personal Saviour and as the great Guide who will lead him to complete manhood.

Moreover, the Presbyterian Pioneer Program does not forget the leader. In addition to the Manual for Leaders which

has been prepared, simplified record cards and a suggested yearly program of activities are available. In addition to this, the Director of Boys' Work is always ready to assist wherever possible by personally helping in the planning of the program and in the meeting of special problems.

WILL IT WORK?

IT is natural to ask of any program the important question, "Does it work?" The Pioneer Program had proved its value before it was adopted as one of the programs of Presbyterian Boys' Work. No better answer to the question can be given than the following quotation from a letter written on November 15th by the Rev. William F. Wefer of Dayton, New Jersey, who is using the Pioneer Program.

"The club is composed of twenty-two boys from nine to sixteen years of age. They meet as one club weekly. Because of lack of available leadership and more time from my other work as leader, it has been impossible to divide them into a more natural grouping. The first meeting of the month is a business meeting. The program committee reports special features for the month. There are also monthly elections of a Chaplain, Pastor's Assistant, Librarian and Custodian of Games. The second and third meetings have some special feature ending with games in the basement of the church which has been cleared as a make-shift gymnasium. We have already had a lecture on 'First Aid' given by our local doctor and illustrated

with views supplied by the State Museum. On another occasion, one of the two survivors of the battle between the Pearsarge and the Confederate cruiser Alabama who resides in Dayton, gave them a talk on the battle and the Navy during the Civil War. The boys also enjoy dividing the club into groups and putting on a political campaign, a 'show' with musical numbers and impromptu plays. The last meeting of the month is reserved for the athletic tests. All the boys are graded according to their weight and are scored in each event. Most of the boys live on farms and are therefore busy on Saturdays. We are compelled

to run our tests out-of-doors in the moonlight or with the aid of automobile lights.

"Last year we held a Father and Son Banquet with one hundred ten present. This year, because of other suppers and hard times, we are going to make it a big get-together. During the first part of December we had a splendid visit from one of the Princeton University Deputation Teams over a week-end with a program that was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. The work among the boys is bearing its fruition in loyal attendance in the Sunday

school and especially the Sunday morning service."

"There are some things that are impossible," but certainly a real program for boys in our rural communities does not belong here. If you are interested in removing your boys' work from this list, write for further information to the Director of Boys' Work, 423 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



*A Pioneer Pyramid
Presbyterian Boys of Dayton, N. J.*

THE FEDERATED CHURCH OF McCONNELLSBURG



*St. Paul's
Reformed Church
and the Federa-
tion's pastor,
Rev. Wm. J. Lowe
(opposite)*

NINE years of federation for two proud old churches in McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania, have "brought forth results far beyond the fondest hopes of those who were responsible for its beginning." This town of fewer than six hundred people had in 1914 five churches, five parsonages and five ministers to support. It had become necessary for the Reformed and Presbyterian churches to seek aid each year from their sustentation boards. They therefore determined on a federation under one pastor, each church to maintain its 'individuality. It was no easy thing for these two old congregations to lay aside their own congregational life and combine their interests, for each had a long and distinguished history. The Presbyterian Church is the oldest church organization in the county, its beginnings being prior to 1769, and the beginnings of the Reformed Church were prior to 1830.

The mechanism of federation was as follows. The Presbytery of Carlisle and the Classis of McConnellsburg were overtured and committees were appointed to investigate. They gave their approval and left the details of the plan to the official boards of the church, who organized a Federated Board. The congregation then gave their approval of the



pian and the following policy was set up and has been adhered to almost without change:

Both church buildings are used, the services each Sabbath alternating morning and evening in both churches. During the winter months only one building is used each Sabbath, with all the services in that church, the Sunday schools meeting together. The following week all the services are held in the other church. Each congregation and Sabbath school conducts its own financial affairs and contributes to its denominational activities.

The Christian Endeavor Society is a union organization and meets in the church where the evening service is held, prior to that service.

The mid-week service is attended by both congregations gathering together and alternating week about between the churches.

The young people of the church meet together in a catechetical class during the early months of the year and are instructed by the pastor in the Heidelberg and Westminster Catechisms and prepared for full church membership. At the confirmation or communion service, these young people are received as one class in whichever church building the service is held. New members are received in like manner into the church of the denomination to which they choose to belong.

Four Holy Communion services are held each year, two in the Reformed Church, administered according to its custom and two in the Presbyterian Church according to its form. These services are attended by an unusually large percentage of the entire membership.

The Christmas and Easter services alternate between the two churches.

The Federated Board transacts the business which affects the Federated Church, while in matters pertaining to denominational affairs, the Session with the Pastor as Moderator and the Consistory with the Pastor as President, meet separately.

The following results speak for themselves:

The Federation has not only been of great help to the church locally, but the Presbytery and Classis have each been saving more than \$200.00 a year, so that these funds can be applied to other Kingdom work. Meanwhile the church's contributions have been steadily growing. From 1913 to 1922 the benevolent offerings of the Presbyterian congregation increased 420 per cent, and of the Reformed, 330 per cent. Funds for congregational purposes increased with the Presbyterians 191 per cent; with the Reformed 89 per cent. The increase in church membership over this period has been 32 per cent for the Presbyterians and 34 per cent for the Reformed. In 1922 there were 275 active members, 180 Reformed and 95 Presbyterian.

The Reformed church being the stronger in membership pays 55 per cent of the minister's salary and provides the parsonage. The houses of worship are in excellent condition and have been improved beyond the expectation of many.

Best of all, the seal of Divine approval has been given in the unmistakable material and spiritual blessings which have been received. An example has been set, the influence of which has been felt in the local community, where the spirit of unity and co-operation between the churches is the best ever known in recent times. This influence has reached beyond the community and is being felt in many other fields where consolidation is badly needed for the welfare of the Kingdom.



McConnellsburg Presbyterian Church

THE COUNTRY DINNER

W. H. Wilson

WHEN religion has outgrown churches I suppose it will still express itself in dinners, for a meal is older than a temple. We know the Lord instituted a sacramental meal, whether he established a church or not. Surely a dinner is nearer to the mind of God, especially a country dinner. And when art ceases to be academic, or childish, it will still set a table; for a common meal is a work of art. It represents life in a fuller degree than canvas or marble can. A country dinner in a remote farmhouse, with twenty-five at the table, in the great kitchen, is one of the highest experiences. And when scientists grow up to be men they will pass from the study of the antique or the savage to read the lesson of life at the dinner party. For a country dinner party is a social gathering.

Nowadays they come to a country dinner in autos. What greetings at the driveway! What explanations of the farmer's intentions to widen the approach, that used to serve for carriages! What merry expectant faces of children! and kisses exchanged by cousins who never dare on ordinary occasions! Then there is a long wait in "the sitting room," where the man of the house is not loath to explain about his new pipeless furnace, or his new electric light system. And all the time from the big kitchen there are sounds of bustle and smells of purest satisfaction, smells of meat cooking, whiffs of spices in pies. And nobody looks that way; it would be unmannerly. The expectant group is

enlarged at times during the interval by arrivals from the barn or the yard, or by whole family groups bundled in wraps. Finally the farm hands enter in their best clothes, which they have had on since breakfast. This is the sign that dinner is about ready.

Nowadays we have place-cards. It used to be easy to seat the family on the genial order from the host to "sit down anywhere," for once custom and privilege were clear, and no one blundered. But now at each place is a pretty card with a verse and beside it a toy from Woolworth's store of trifles,—each one unlike the other: a miniature elephant lifting tiny logs, a coach and four the size of a walnut. The children are no more pleased at these than their elders, and while the first turkey is carved and served by the patriarch, the verses are read and compared. There is more than one neat quip and some fine sentiment. But it is not till hunger is sated, an hour later, that the smaller children climb down from their chairs and encircle the table to inspect the tiny toys; and not every one of their elders would part with their mementoes of the occasion.

The carving by the head of the house is a religious rite, which not even an eldest son may perform, and an artistic performance, capping the good wife's achievement. We remember an old farmer who analyzed two turkeys into portions for each plate so completely that the platter was carried off empty: every bone was served, with its due por-

tions of dark or light; and on every plate a heap of potato, of turnip and of dressing, so much that the plate could hold no more. On any but a holiday there would be expostulation. But today even the delicate maiden aunt who has never confessed a gusto for things, receives hers calmly and empties her plate in some manner.

Now the art of the country dinner is known to the women alone. To the men it is victuals. The women inspect every dish and taste every flavor, sense every shading of spice in pickle or jam, with delicate analysis of inherited recipes and nicety of comparison with other occasions and other family recipes. That this dinner is a work of art is shown by the regulated comment upon recipes. At the time of eating there is only silent appreciation, but the lady of the house trembles for the brown on her turkey or the "jell" of her cranberries. Some other day, but not on the day of the dinner, these women will exchange the tricks of their art. Today the talk is of all else than the masterpiece in which the day centers.

What an art, the serving of food! The world has gone far from it and as art goes farther away from the preparing of food it becomes less religious. For food is what all men want. The desire to get it, the joy of having it, the relish of receiving it are representative of all men. The pitiful dependence of all men upon the daily meal is the most tragic phase of human life in daily experience. To appeal to the appreciation of hungry men is therefore the greatest art of all. No wonder country women prize old recipes and cherish grandmother's cook book, for the beauty of their work will have immediate criticism.

When the desserts are served the religious and the social tokens are in every dish. Now appears with the mince and pumpkin pie, the Indian pudding, which Colonial ancestors in Connecticut learned from the aborigines, a sacred symbol of the family's continuance. Every new member the family acquires by marriage or birth must learn to like Indian pudding. It is a test of the constancy of husbands, to eat it. The skill of young housewives for three hundred years has been sharpened in the making of this dish for the ceremonial meals. Its basic principle is cornmeal, upon which prosaic background is laid every spicy fruit we have found in the markets of modern cities. The result is that husbands in this family are as steady as old Dobbin in his stall, and sons return with their wives to learn nuances of the last generation.

The blessing at the sitting down is the fitting expression of the religious feeling of the day; but the sober faces of the men, the best clothes of the women and the solemn elation of the day are no less eloquent that the spirit of ancient feasts is here in the farmhouse.

There are two things more that move one deeply at a country dinner. One is its sacramental character among those who till the soil and produce food. Who knows as they know what food means? For what God and themselves have made, they with God may enjoy. Their meal and meat

and the fruit of age-old trees in the orchard, the spice of ancient shrubs that ancestors planted in the garden behind the house, are God's gifts. No farmer forgets the chances of the crop or the uncertainty of creation. Providence is a familiar doctrine. So they give thanks and eat with solemn joy. Agriculture concerns itself with food at its best. If husbandmen are to produce food, they must have women in the house who know how to make food perfect, that there may be a reward in their life of toil.

It is an ancient rite to eat food. The common meal is as old as the Glacial Age and the cave-homes of Southern Europe. Yeats says that the oldest things in the world are wind and water and the curlew's cry. Well, the oldest thing of mankind is the common meal.

For it is an evidence of kinship. Kinship is good, but it is too easily dissolved in days of wealth like these. It is well to make real its elusive values. The dinner is a token of hospitality, too; and we will do well to remember to entertain strangers. Here all the world meets. Dr. Howard Wilson writes:

"On Tuesday of this week there was celebrated at

Muddy Creek the golden wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Francis Grove.

"The interest and sympathy and service of this home have reached pretty well around the world. One son, Edward, has driven the stakes of his tent at the farthest land-line west, and he sent from San Francisco as the expression of his affection and at the same time the earliest noted product of his adopted state, a golden vase. Two daughters, Elsie and Viola, have traveled eastward more than ten thousand miles, touching England, the continent on through Egypt to the Soudan and Khartoom. One of them has returned. Miss Viola is principal of the high school at Hyde Park, N. Y. Miss Elsie Grove is one of the best known missionaries of her church. Another daughter, Mary Todd, has her home at Greencastle, S. C. The Rev. Wilson V. Grove is a minister near Pittsburgh. Harry Grove operates the home farm. The little home, which hasty judgment might appraise as limited to York county soil, sends out its messages, and receives its tidings from more than half way around the world."

This is what the homestead is—an epitome of the world as the members of the house know it. The family altar is God's fire, and the roof of the house covers his tabernacle, else there is no true church anywhere. Fear not, therefore, in "these days" when divorces are too many. The household is stronger than the forces that war against it. It endures tropic heat and arctic cold; it is no more perfect on a homestead than in a tenement, and is in both city and country a hollow in the hand of God where men may have peace. Peace and food; the cave-man was thankful for these and lay down to rest. The gentleman farmer can do no more when he has eaten his Thanksgiving Dinner with his kindred and his guest at the table spread in the great kitchen.



From Rev. G. B. Gilbert, Middletown, Conn.

Noontime in the Country Church, when morning service is over, and huckleberry pie is in order

FROM OUR STUDY WINDOW



JANUARY MORALIZING

LIVE and Learn" is an old admonition which each turn of the calendar brings vividly to mind. Who has the name to live, if he would really live, must learn, else while living his life loses its meaning. More people seem interested these days in knowing what is true about more kinds of things—and more disputations about it—than was the case a bit ago. When people so heatedly debate a tenet of politics or science or religion it must be a sign that they are profoundly concerned about it. To debate doesn't of course necessarily mean that the debater is seeking new light, but that he is sufficiently interested in a subject to break a lance for it is in itself a good sign.

Intellectual growth is a profoundly important thing. The schools and churches might well be more interested in it than they are. There is a deal of education—no, that isn't the word—there is a deal of schooling, let us rather say, that doesn't further intellectual growth, that is, the capacity to discover, absorb and appreciate truth. The assimilation of facts, even if exactly and accurately noted, is not education, but the material for education. We use bricks to build a house, but bricks are not a house.

If today sees no more meaning in things than yesterday saw, feels no more deeply about them, has no deeper appreciation of their significance, then is today worse off than yesterday was. Today always needs more truth than yesterday. Few, very few, have more light in a day than they need for that day. At best we only skirt the edges of reality. If then, while the world goes on, we stand still, our minds stand still, look at today with the dimming eyes of yesterday, measure new things with old yardsticks, thrust new experiences into old moulds, then are we ever living without learning, or ever learning without coming to a knowledge of the truth. Why, it's like a minister who year after year can turn over the same barrel of sermons, or the professor who can read to the son exactly the same lecture he prepared for the father, and see therein nothing inadequate.

That isn't to say that the truth of yesterday is in itself inadequate for today. But no man plumbs truth to its depths. He hasn't experience enough or insight enough. Few come to truth intuitively. We find it in experience. And experience is limited. So, as we grow and enlarge our experience, we increase our capacity for truth. We enrich our background for understanding it. No man ever reached the point where his experience of God no longer needed to be enlarged and enriched. So, if a man can preach today exactly the same sermon he preached ten years ago, it must be either that he had a wonderful gift of intuition and knew not fully what he said and has since been slowly growing up to it, or that he has not grown in ten years.

WHAT COUNTRY MINISTERS THINK OF THEIR JOB

IT has been very interesting to watch the change, during the last decade, in the way country ministers think about their work, about the place of the country church in the community and the worthwhileness of the field of service which it offers to a minister. Ten years ago most country ministers were the victims of a profound depression. If they were country ministers from necessity, they irked under it and longed to escape. If they were country ministers from choice, or from a habit to which they had become resigned, they were apt to suffer from what contemporary jargon terms an "inferiority complex." But in the intervening years our conception of the place of the church in rural life and in the scheme of things generally has undergone a sea change.

The older attitude we might diagnose this way. The country church was declining. This decline was *absolute* in many sections, i. e., country churches were losing in membership and influence. It was *relative* in all sections, i. e., with the growth of cities and towns, more and more their great, strong churches were overshadowing the smaller country churches and assuming a disproportionate influence in church councils. Ecclesiastically, therefore, the country church, while one remained in it, offered little chance for preferment. Moreover, the country church field was not sufficiently alluring in other ways to compensate for its ecclesiastical disadvantages. Country life itself was under an ever-increasing disadvantage. Socially and economically it was lagging behind the country as a whole. And finally, most people felt, if they thought about it at all, that the church, by the very nature of its mission, was estopped from undertaking the social and economic regeneration of its community. There you had it! A declining church in a declining community, each limited by the other.

Little by little the vicious circle has been broken through. Churches in self defense have devoted themselves to rebuilding their communities and in so doing have rebuilt themselves. Little by little the church has come to see the futility of the limitations it put upon its own work and influence. We suppose that now most ministers in country communities accept as *of course* what most of them used to deny as *of course*, that the responsibility of the church includes the whole range of human need. So the country church no longer appears as a diminishing field of large demands and small returns. It appears rather as a field which will tax to the uttermost every gift of wisdom, leadership, energy and spirituality that a man has and offer him in return such an opportunity as no other man has to contribute to the building of a Christian civilization.

In consequence, those country ministers who are country ministers indeed, no longer have need to suffer from an inferiority complex. They have justifiable pride in their work, the pride that comes from knowing that they have work to do of supreme importance and supreme rewards. If this new year deepens that feeling in those who have it and wins new converts to it, it will go a long way toward winning rural America for the Kingdom of our Lord.

OUR BOOK SHELF

THE SOCIAL TREND. By Edward A. Ross. Century Co., 1923. \$1.75.

PROFESSOR Ross is a great reporter as well as an able sociologist. He has a gift in narrative. And he is never dull. In "The Social Trend" he plays the part of the man in the watch tower. Everything that goes by he takes account of. He undertakes to give his interpretation of all the main tendencies of our day. Only two chapters deal with specifically rural themes and it is with those chapters alone that this review concerns itself.

Chapter three is entitled "Folk Depletion and Rural Decline." There is nothing strikingly new in this chapter. Indeed, it is for the most part based upon observations made during a walking trip in September, 1911. It is a dirge on the low estate of the countryside. The explanation is that the more ambitious elements have departed from the country—he was walking through the hill towns of New England—and that this has deprived the country of the qualities of initiative and leadership. The lesser qualities alone have perpetuated themselves. The result is not folk degeneration but folk depletion. The remedies which he describes sound like the programs of agricultural extension as they first began to be developed a dozen years ago.

Chapter four, "Doing Without the Frontier," reads like another manuscript from which he has blown away the dust of ten years' accumulation. It is a discussion of the effects both upon agriculture and upon our national states of mind of the disappearance of free land. It is quite in keeping that he should quote Arthur Chapman's poem, "Out Where the West Begins." We can remember when they used to put that on souvenir calendars. But Professor Ross's reputation does not rest upon his contributions to rural sociology.

A CHRISTIAN PROGRAM FOR THE RURAL COMMUNITY. By Kenyon L. Butterfield. George H. Doran Co., 1923. \$1.50.

THE material of this book comprises the Fondren Lectures for 1923, delivered before the School of Theology of Southern Methodist University. President Butterfield is a master of formulae. No one is better able than he to state in lucid and logical form the elements of a constructive national program. He believes in the value of programs and policies as necessary to the clarification of thought and the focusing of attention and effort.

Of the five lectures in the volume the first two discuss, in general terms, the need of a Christian program and the principles involved therein. The danger of impending paganism is stressed. The omission from many formulations of Christian principles in relation to society of any specifically rural applications is criticised, since the world is two-thirds rural. The essential nature of the Christian ideal for society is strikingly set forth.

From this point the author proceeds to apply his own generalizations to rural affairs. The last three chapters are in his happiest vein. Each fundamental social principle previously advanced is directly applied to rural conditions and related to rural institutions and practices. The conception of the church which he develops is that of an institution whose clear task it is "to mobilize Christian senti-

ment, ideals, and programs; to lead in formulating and carrying out a Christian program for the rural community." Rightly, we think, he exalts the message and function of the church above its organization and its machinery. The book ends with a brief exposition of the community idea in its various manifestations and with a challenge to the church to set about the task of truly Christianizing each local community.

TOWN AND COUNTRY RELATIONS and COUNTRY COMMUNITY EDUCATION. Proceedings of the Fourth and Fifth National Country Life Conferences. Published for the American Country Life Association by the Association Press. \$1.00 each.

THESE two volumes, brought out after considerable delay, are essential for every student of current rural conditions. They contain a great deal of material which can be found nowhere else. They are indexed and are reference volumes of first rate importance.

"TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES," by Hermann N. Morse and Edmund deS. Brunner. The Institute of Social and Religious Research. \$1.50.

NOT long ago a great teacher urged students to do their reading and thinking in terms of mathematical statement. Here are two writers on religion who state the experience of worship and faith in forms of measurement. The book is a feat to delight a professor of English. Here is that topic of all themes most prosaic, the country church, presented to the reader with a clarity, and charm, through nearly two hundred pages, to equal Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* or Gray's *Elegy*. The literary medium chosen is that of statistical description. Not a hortatory word: not an edifying instance: not a sentence of prejudice appeals to the vulgar. Nor is there a statistical table, curve or diagram to tax the wits of practical men. There is just one sustained intellectual flight, above the ground but never in the clouds, to show to the thoughtful and responsible what the facts are of universal concern to religious people, in the matter of the American Churches in small communities.

In these concise pages of analysis there is presented a national experience of religion. For we have had a great religious experience of religion in America,—though the schools of divinity know it not. The whole country is presented in nine regions, in each of which a common social life prevails that conditions church form and religious habit. The concept of the community is used with a boldness which will interest sociologists. These devices, being new, may challenge scientific criticism. The English prose in which the story runs may even more offend pedantic statisticians, but the reader will give thanks for that. These writers have an unchallenged accuracy of statement in the language every minister can read. I will not say that he who runs can read: for the reader who begins this tale will sit to the end. We have had too much religious shouting and pious writing to those who also run. It is well now to "sit astonished for the space of half an hour" and hear the truth.

Besides the two first chapters, which present the American churches in town and country, there is a sure measurement of vital experiences that have puzzled and confused us. Here is the answer to the question: Is the church declining? What is the utility, and what the abuse, of home mission aid? What is done in religious education? How much do country churches cost, and how adequately are they equipped to serve the modern spirit of worship? And here you may estimate, beyond peradventure or guess, what the Church of Christ is doing for those so dear to His Spirit, the migrant worker, the farm renter and the alien.

(Continued on page 17)

WORKERS' FORUM

FOR THE INTERCHANGE OF OUR PLANS AND SUCCESSES

WHERE THE TREASURE IS

MID-WEEK service at Winkleman, Arizona, is to be converted into a community night. Once a month each family will bring supper and other weeks they will assemble at seven in the social room for games. At eight they will adjourn upstairs for worship.

ANINTH grade room in the schools and a series of physical examinations for school children are due to the influence of the pastor at Wetonka, S. D., Rev. E. B. Severin.

A CHURCH barn was built before snow set in up in northern New York State, at Oswegatchee Second Church. Church attendance had fallen off because after the destruction of the church sheds two years ago horses had to be tied to the fence or left at neighboring farms. Both cars and horses will now be tendered hospitality.

I FEEL that a well-kept church building is an asset to any town and will do much to win the good-will of the whole community." And since the Irvington, Cal., church was "a disgrace to the town" this minister, who makes this statement, John R. Stevenson, has added three rooms for Sunday school and organized groups of boys and men to clear and beautify the grounds.

"Drumming up" an audience for the Sunday evening service at Weed, Cal., a town whose church has been successful in the fight against secularizing the Sabbath. The dance hall cannot withstand the well-advertised but frank-



IN a Washington town "community singing has brought about a good neighborly feeling, and hymns, usually accompanied by a history of the hymn and incidents, are sung just as earnestly as secular songs."

AND in Idaho the men of one community made a special effort in the first monthly song service, on a Sunday evening. To organize the community for work is no easy task in this town, but the minister who has already succeeded in closing a degrading Sunday show and getting the liquor forces on the run, until the town board and mayor have been elected from a clean lot of citizens, will surely accomplish it.

WHERE there is someone in the community who really cares what boys and girls do, they hardly ever go wrong. Real love and understanding of young people will work wonders." And the woman who says this can claim a freedom from moonshine in her valley, which obtains in none of its neighbors.

WHEN a missionary from India was scheduled to speak in the Sharp Texas church and a traveling show threatened competition a little judicious advertising brought

them to the church, where they were entertained, as well as instructed and inspired.

SERVICES twice a month at the County Home, twice at the County Jail, and visits twice a month to the County Sanatorium are on the schedule of the pastor at Ontonagon in the upper peninsula of Michigan.

WITH the help of the Business League of Collegeport, Texas, Rev. A. B. Buchanan purchased a house and moved the public library of 1,200 volumes from the school house when the school had increased its attendance.

FROM AN EVANGELIST IN THE BLUE GRASS COUNTRY

DURING the month of October I held a series of 16 evangelistic services. The attendance was growing and large, seeming to touch the entire community. The interest was very deep and tender. Many are under conviction and we

will receive a number soon. This community has been burnt over with so-called "revival meetings." I find these meetings—one going on somewhere almost constantly—have been conducted much on the "Holy Roller" plan, exciting a n d emotional and just to get "joiners," a n d when the meetings closed the work stopped and reaction set in, so that it is the popular idea and expectation that almost all who join will soon backslide. I found the mass of unconverted people are disgusted with religion—most young people attending just to have a good time together. They come to our meetings, but we had the best of order and attention from them. So I took an entirely different turn from what I have done in other such meetings and from what is the custom out there. I told them to forget that there is any church organization, that we were not working simply to add members to our church; that we wanted no one to join a church who is not converted; that if a soul was truly converted he would not need to be urged to join a church, as it would be natural for him to seek a home in the church; that it is a matter between him and the Saviour, and so I should preach Christ Jesus to them and leave them face to face with Him. It is a new proposition to them to put it that way, as they have expected some one to sing and plead at the close of the sermon and hold on, and then they "join" as they would a lodge or a social organization. I am sowing and it takes time for the reaping. It may not come in my time but will come. I treat it as a fair, square proposition from God to be accepted in a manly, straightforward way and then, having changed Masters to go out and live for the new Master every day. This, I believe, will bring real converts and not backsliders.

ly religious competition of this resourceful minister. Persistent enthusiasm for a broad program and the addition of an equipment and personnel have made the Weed Church 100 % effective at every point.

ings closed the work stopped and reaction set in, so that it is the popular idea and expectation that almost all who join will soon backslide. I found the mass of unconverted people are disgusted with religion—most young people attending just to have a good time together. They come to our meetings, but we had the best of order and attention from them. So I took an entirely different turn from what I have done in other such meetings and from what is the custom out there. I told them to forget that there is any church organization, that we were not working simply to add members to our church; that we wanted no one to join a church who is not converted; that if a soul was truly converted he would not need to be urged to join a church, as it would be natural for him to seek a home in the church; that it is a matter between him and the Saviour, and so I should preach Christ Jesus to them and leave them face to face with Him. It is a new proposition to them to put it that way, as they have expected some one to sing and plead at the close of the sermon and hold on, and then they "join" as they would a lodge or a social organization. I am sowing and it takes time for the reaping. It may not come in my time but will come. I treat it as a fair, square proposition from God to be accepted in a manly, straightforward way and then, having changed Masters to go out and live for the new Master every day. This, I believe, will bring real converts and not backsliders.

THE pastor at the Genoa, N. Y., Presbyterian Church built a radio set recently, the funds being raised by local subscription, to give to one of the Sunday school boys suffering from the after-effects of infantile paralysis. The Sunday school teachers visit him turn about, that he may not miss his Sunday school lesson.

ON the Long Prairie field in Minnesota a pastor is maintained largely by the efforts of the Ladies' Aid, who raise money by such heroic efforts as serving for the County Fair each year. Their thoughtfulness has also within the year added a complete kitchen at the cost of \$500.

CROSS-SECTIONS OF AN AVERAGE WESTERN TOWN

THE general atmosphere of the town and country people is not hostile toward the church and the message it seeks to exalt; but still there is a woeful indifference evident. The people are not hungering and thirsting to worship God. They are not morally bad, still they are dreadfully unconcerned about the development in the knowledge and experience of the Word of God. I am putting forth my utmost to get men to help me in the work. Little co-operation is coming forth, however. The women are the mainstay. It is an abnormal condition, as if the Kingdom of God were only for women. I am pleading with the men individually that God needs them for a big job. I try my best to make them feel that it is a manly thing to worship God the Father. The Sunday school morale had been fearfully lax. It had come nothing short of the characteristics of a Jewish Day School. I solicited the cooperation of the parents to aid me in creating an atmosphere of reverence in the church, which is absolutely essential to any fruitful work. I have asked for firmness and sternness coupled with tenderness. The demoralized condition of the Sunday school has been going on for years. The people are telling me that the church attendance is improving since I arrived. I do preach with the fervor and sincerity of heart and mind. But that is not sufficient. Oh, it is a help to many, I know; but God, Himself, has to do something in the hearts and lives of this people that I and a few faithful may sense and pray for. The petty animosities among the people here aggravate the condition of the church expansion, and it does somewhat retard the growth of the church. It may be externally a great thing to increase the membership of the local church, but what this congregation is in most need of is inner growth and not exterior growth. I wish I could see the day where both the inner and the outer growth and increase shall go hand in hand. Quite a goodly number of non-church members are attending the church. There are some very fine Christian folks living here.

MONTANA.

I AM working now trying to get the church down into an organized body. The organization we know in the East is lacking here, and a church will never be a success until it has some stability. Everything in the community is unorganized, everything with its doors open, that

is, all public cooperative organizations. The only successful incentive to organization seems to be hatred of some groups of human beings. The numerous small churches are living on these barbaric feelings.

I am preaching and working to get one congregation to stand by a liberal program. With this in mind we are stressing all public affairs and movements, Town Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts, community Father and Son interest, co-operation with the Chamber of Commerce, whatever public affairs occur. The ideas emphasized in the church are those pertaining to the common units of society. I am working on family religion. Families don't co-operate here. It is not at all customary for families to attend church together. Family pews are unknown.

OREGON.

AN INCENTIVE TO FAITH

AMONG rising community houses few heartier projects exist than that in the ex-soldier settlement, Lingle, Wyoming. Some day the whole story will be available for the specific direction of others, but while the roofing and floor are still unfinished incidents are constantly occurring to prove the necessity of the structure. A group of young men who are building a federal highway through the neighborhood use the gymnasium along with the scouts and older resident groups, for basketball.

Meanwhile ingenuity develops in money raising, home-talent plays being manufactured to avoid a royalty and the costumes fashioned by the actor. As skill develops the men are pitted against the women in such entertainments and outside judges come to review their productions, their decisions averaged in with the gate receipts and the vote of the audience. The winning side is entertained by those who lose, and the profits go to the community house. The pastor comments as follows:

"Sometimes people oppose social work such as I am trying to do for my community on the ground that it is not spiritual. Never in all my life have I had to resort to prayer and live by faith as now. Some of my problems in connection with the building of the community are such mountains as Christ spoke of. But prayer has removed them."

RURAL RELIGION AT ITS BEST

IT occurred to me that an account of our little country church might be of interest to you. Ours is a Presbyterian church whose membership numbers 218. We are situated in the open country six miles from the nearest railroad depot. With the church as the center a circle whose radius is 4 miles could be drawn and this would include 90 per cent of our membership. Elmira community is an old Scotch settlement comprising about 15,000 acres of land, almost 10,000 of which belong to the members of our church.

Just recently we have celebrated our first Harvest Home Festival. We had originally intended to make this a church affair but were led to include the entire community. Consequently various committees were appointed and work began in earnest. It was our plan to have special Sunday services with possibly two well known preachers as our guests, and

have one day as community day during which the community as a whole could participate in various festivities.

There was no building adequate for our needs, so we decided to rent a large tent. We discovered, however, that not one tent but three were necessary. The large auditorium tent 50 x 80 held 700 people and had a stage which held a chorus of 100 school children. The dining tent 40 x 80 was arranged with a kitchen at one end and dining room for 250 people at a time. The exhibit tent was 30 x 50 and was thought to be too large for the purpose. When the tents arrived and were being erected a drizzle of rain dampened the ardent spirits of the committee. But the work progressed nevertheless and when Sunday, October 28th arrived the sun broke through the clouds and brought warmth and gladness to a depressed people. Dr. T. H. McMichael, the honored president of Monmouth College, was the speaker in the morning. He spoke with fervor on "The Glory of the Christian Home." Over 500 people were in attendance, by far the largest number ever assembled in a community that numbers only 400 within 4 miles of the church. We were very fortunate to secure for the evening service Dr. Frederick F. Shannon, the successor of the late Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus in the Central Church pulpit in Chicago. Dr. Shannon produced a profound impression on the great audience of over 600 people who came from far and near to hear him. He preached on the "Thoughts of the Harvest Home Season." This was the first day of the Festival. It was a wonderful day. The services were inspiring. The community choir of 25 voices was a surprise to all. They sang out of the fullness of their hearts and rendered their anthems with a fine degree of interpretation.

The Monday following was a day of preparation. The people of the community worked faithfully all day long and looked forward with great anticipation to the morrow. Tuesday came, but the first snow storm of the season came with it. There was nothing to do but carry out the program. At 11 A. M. the school children of eight districts gave a fine concert. One hundred children sang in the big chorus and this proved to be an unusual feature. Over 400 people had assembled for this program. Lunch was served by the ladies of the Culture Club, after which a float parade passed the review stand.

The afternoon was spent in playing the old-fashioned game of soccer. Men who hadn't kicked a ball for decades became young again and with the first kick the process of rejuvenation began. The chicken-pie dinner had been widely advertised and before 8 o'clock in the evening over 800 hungry mouths had been fed. The ladies had never fed such a large number, but their organization was most efficient.

The day was brought to a close by a concert given by a troupe of Jubilee Singers from the St. Paul Presbyterian Church of Chicago. Over 700 crowded into the big tent to hear the spirituelle and old plantation songs. We could not have accommodated many more. Over one thousand people were present on Tuesday, a number which far exceeded our wildest fancies.

The exhibit of community products was worthy of a county fair. The ladies had a wonderful display of quilts, knitted goods, hand embroidery, paintings in oil, china painting, canned fruits and pen work. The school children displayed their constructive work, writing, art work, and posters. The men brought apples, corn, small grains, vegetables, antiques and relics. Over one thousand passed through this tent and expressed their surprise at the high quality of the exhibits. No prizes were given, no ribbons were placed, but all were happy in spite of that.

This was the greatest community enterprise ever undertaken and people are ready for another festival next year. All expenses were met and a substantial balance was left

in the treasury. On every hand there was a wonderful degree of community loyalty and co-operation and the festival will go down in our history as a welder of community consciousness. It has done more than all the theorizing of the past.

THE Presbyterian Church in this community is a wide-awake institution. The Sunday school has an active membership of 160 members and this year has an average attendance of 125—this in spite of some very unfavorable Sundays and occasional bad roads. We have a men's class of 45 members—one of the largest classes in the county. Recently in a contest we had as many as 82 present on one Sunday and in three months had an average attendance of 52. This year we decided to have the largest Rally Day attendance we have ever had and as a result of a little effort we had 245 in Sunday school that morning—the largest Sunday school we have had in the history of the church.

The young people have a very energetic Christian Endeavor society. They meet each Sunday night and have an average attendance of 30. This is a young people's church. They constitute the largest percentage in attendance at the Sunday evening worship. The choir of 18 is composed largely of young people,—they do the work of the church and are happy to do it.

We expect in the near future to build a modern church building and use the old structure as a social and recreational center. Ours is a settled community; most of the farmers own the land they work and take a great interest in the work of the church.

This is my first pastorate after leaving McCormick Seminary. I was presented with a Ford Sedan upon my arrival. The manse is equipped with running water system, has steam heat, electric lights and is being improved this year by the addition of a 30 by 12 foot veranda and an asbestos roof. There is plenty of hard work but it is highly rewarding. The open country church is a challenge to me and with the aid of a fine session we are working out our problems one by one.

For the past fifteen years we have averaged over \$2,000.00 per year for missions, so our horizon extends farther than that seen from the parish belfry. We gave a foreign missionary from our own congregation and supported him entirely for nine years. Now we maintain our home missionary and another foreign missionary. We are the largest per capita givers for missions in our Presbytery and claim to be the first in the State. The pastor gets \$2,000 per year and free use of the manse.

There is much talk of the decadence of the open country church. Here is an exception. This is a living organism making great preparations for the future—holding its own for 40 years and more optimistic now than at any time in its history. I think the others should know about this church.

C. HARRISON BECKER,

Elmira Presbyterian Church,
R. F. D., Toulon, Illinois

OUR BOOK SHELF

(Continued from page 14)

The longing for reality in religion is not confined to the pious. All men hope for such assured statement of fact as may be had in the experience of the unknown. Scholars, administrators and business men will welcome this book. Faith has come down from the clouds, and statistics out of the machine. There is a grace and charm about the event that makes one dare hope they have kissed one another.

W. H. WILSON.

SPECIAL OFFER

To Readers of "Home Lands"

READERS of "Home Lands" are familiar with the notable series of Town and Country studies brought out by the Institute of Social and Religious Research (formerly Committee on Social and Religious Surveys) under the direction of Edmund deS. Brunner.

Many readers have already bought the entire series at \$9.75. But there are perhaps others who feel that all they require of this series are the **summary** volume, entitled "The Town and Country Church in the United States," which epitomizes the entire rural church situation, and the particular **regional** volume which deals intensively with the section of the country in which they live.

The publisher's list price of these two volumes is \$5.00; but to meet the requirements of such readers a special offer is made of

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